CLAIMS

1. A method for inhibiting the percutaneous absorption of a physiologically active agent topically applied to a transdermal administration site of a subject, the method including the step of applying to skin of the subject at the transdermal administration site, a device comprising a membrane for contacting the skin of the subject coated on the skin contacting side thereof with a layer of an adhesive.

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the membrane device is applied to the transdermal administration site of a subject who has received at least one of (a) an overdose of transdermally applied physiologically active agent and (b) adverse side effects from the physiologically active agent, wherein the dose of physiologically active agent transferred to the blood stream is thereby reduced.

3. A method according to any one of the previous claims wherein the membrane is applied to the whole of the transdermal application site.

4. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the physiologically active agent is administered so as to form a reservoir of the physiologically active agent in the skin and the application of said membrane device results in the physiologically active agent being extracted from the skin to significantly reduce the total dose of drug which would otherwise be administered transdermally.

5. A method for removal of physiologically active agent from the reservoir thereof within the skin of a subject following transdermal administration of the physiologically active agent to a site on the skin of the subject the method including the step of applying a device comprising a membrane to the site of transdermal administration of the pharmaceutically active agent.

6. A method according to claim 5 wherein the membrane is coated with a layer of an adhesive on the skin contacting side of the membrane for adhering the membrane to the site of transdermal administration.

7. A method according to anyone of the previous claims wherein the membrane device comprises of an elastic, occlusive or semi-permeable layer selected from polyurethane polymers, ethylene vinyl acetate copolymers, hydrocolloid and cellulosic membranes.

8. A method according to claim 1 or claim 6 wherein the adhesive layer is permeable to the physiologically active agent and is selected from the group consisting of acrylics, polyethylenes, polysiloxanes, polyisobutylenes, polyacrylates, polyurethanes, plasticized ethylene vinyl acetate copolymers and tacky rubbers.

9. A method according to any one of the previous claims wherein the membrane is less than 2 mm thick.

10. A method according to anyone of the previous claims wherein the membrane is applied to the site of transdermal administration within 24 hours of transdermal application of the physiologically active agent.

11. A method according to anyone of the previous claims wherein an overdose of physiologically active agent has been topically applied to the site of skin prior to the membrane being applied thereto.

12. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the membrane device is an assembly further comprising at least one layer on the side of said membrane remote from the side applied to the skin and wherein a reservoir of solvent is provided between said at least one layer and said membrane wherein said active agent is at least partially soluble in the solvent.

13. A method according to claim 12 wherein the solvent is selected from the group consisting of alcohols, alkanes, ethers, ketones, chlorinated hydrocarbons and nitriles.

14. A method according to claim 12 wherein the solvent is selected from the group consisting of ethanol and its derivatives, methanol, chloroform, isopropyl alcohol and mixture of two or more thereof.

15. A method according to claim 12 wherein the membrane remains adhered to the skin at the site of transdermal administration for a period of at least 12 hours.

16. A method of reducing the effect of overdose via transdermal administration of a physiologically active agent to a site of skin of a subject to form a reservoir of physiologically active agent in the skin the method comprising providing a membrane assembly for contacting the site of skin the membrane assembly comprising (a) selectively permeable membrane for making contact with the skin to allow ingress of physiologically active agent and provided with an adhesive layer on the skin side thereof, (b) a backing layer and (c) a reservoir of solvent between the backing layer and membrane wherein the physiologically active agent is at least partly soluble in the solvent and preferably (d) a solvent impermeable layer adjacent the side of said membrane remote from the adhesive; and applying the adhesive layer of the membrane assembly to the site of transdermal administration wherein the physiologically active agent is extracted from the skin into the membrane assembly.

17. A method according to any one of the previous claims wherein the physiologically active agent comprises at least one selected from the group consisting of anti-diarrhoeals, anti-hypertensives, calcium channel blockers, anti-arrhythmics, anti-angina agents, beta-adrenergic blocking agents, cardiotonic glycosides, adrenergic stimulants, vasodilators, anti-migraine preparations, anticoagulants, thrombolytic agents, analgesics, hypnotics, anti-anxiety agents, neuroliptic agents anti-psychoticagents, antidepressants, CNS stimulates, anti-Alzheimer agents, anti-Parkinson agents, anticonvulsants, anti-emetics, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agents, anti-rheumatoid agents, muscle relaxant agents for treatment of gout, agents for treatment of hyperuricaemia, oestrogens, progesterone, anti-androgens, anti-oestrogens, androgens, anti-alopecia agents, 5-alpha reductase inhibitors, carbosteroids, pituitary hormones, hypoglycaemic agents, thyroid hormones, pituitary inhibitors, ovulation inducers, anti-muscarinic agents, diuretics, antidiuretics, obstetric drugs, prostaglandins, antimicrobials, anti-tuberculosis drugs, anti-malarials , antivirals, anthelmintics, cytotoxic agents, anorectic agents, agents used in hypocalcaemia, antitussives, expectorants, decongestants,

bronchospasm relaxants, antihistamines, local anaesthetics, neuromuscular blockers, smoking cessation agents, insecticides, dermatological agents, nutritional agents, keratolytics, psychic-energisers, anti-acne agents, anti-itch agents and anti-cholinergic agents.

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